

**Washington, D.C.** - Rep. David Price (D-NC) spoke on the floor of the House of Representatives this evening, urging his colleagues to support a Democratic amendment to legislation reauthorizing the PATRIOT Act. The amendment required the executive branch comply with the Constitution when investigating American citizens, including national security investigations. The amendment also required that the cases of citizens challenging the government's use of PATRIOT Act powers in a court of law be expedited to ensure individual rights are upheld. Republicans rejected the amendment by a 186-234 vote. The text of Rep. Price's remarks is provided below:

*Video of Rep. Price's remarks:*

"This motion is a straightforward as they come: the PATRIOT Act should be enforced in a manner that doesn't violate Americans' constitutional rights, and those who believe their constitutional rights have been violated should receive fair and equitable treatment by the courts.

"I can't imagine any of my colleagues voting against the bedrock principle that the Executive Branch should respect the Constitution when it comes to investigating American citizens.

"After all, when each of us took the oath of office last month, we swore to "support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. We all take this oath seriously – indeed, we opened this session of Congress by reading our Constitution on this very floor just last month, an exercise in which I was pleased to participate.

"It is in this same spirit that we offer this motion. For while we all may have different views on how best to protect our national security while upholding our cherished liberty – and, in this case, on whether the 'enhanced' authorities in this underlying bill are still needed, nearly a decade after the September 11 attacks – we should all be able to agree that the United States Constitution is our last line of defense in cases where an American's civil liberties may be threatened.

"By ensuring that the exercise of these powers does not violate our basic constitutional rights, this motion would provide a 'safety net' to protect Americans' civil liberties in the absence of a more comprehensive review of the PATRIOT Act.

"The second part of the motion states simply that Americans who believe their constitutional rights may have been violated by the government should receive the same expedited consideration by the courts that the government already receives.

"Why shouldn't our courts be equally responsive to the concerns of American citizens as they are to those of the government, especially when an individual believes his constitutional rights have been violated?

"A government of the people, by the people, and for the people has the utmost responsibility to protect the constitutional rights of every individual, especially when it comes to matters of national security.

"This motion to recommit is simple, straightforward, and consistent with the bedrock principles of our Republic. I urge all of my colleagues to vote YES – regardless of their views on the underlying bill – as an affirmation of their support for our Constitution."

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